

ACTOR NICOLAS CAGE SOARS FOR 'BIRDY' WATCHERS

Daily News Magazine



ROCK ISLAND

Why the borough across the bay
is known as Liverpool, U.S.A.

BY JONATHAN MANDELL

Daily News Magazine

FEBRUARY 3, 1985

ASK MR. ENTERTAINMENT

SIX, GUYS, SIX

Who were the five actors who appeared in movies with the two Hepburns—Audrey and Katharine? Please name the films.

Richard Brodals, Bronx

We found six—so here goes. Cary Grant starred in "Bringing Up Baby," "Philadelphia Story" and "Holiday" with Kate and in "Charade" with Audrey; Henry Fonda appeared in "War and Peace" with Audrey and boated "On Golden Pond" with Kate; Humphrey Bogart took Kate up river in "The African Queen" and later fell for Audrey's "Sabrina"; Peter O'Toole locked Kate in the tower in "Lion in Winter" and perpetrated a theft with Audrey in "Steal a Million"; Burt Lancaster was "Unforgiven" by Audrey but turned into "The Rainmaker" for Kate; and, finally, Theodore Bikel played supporting roles in Kate's "The African Queen" and in Audrey's "My Fair Lady."

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

Who played Glenn Ford's girlfriend in "Pocketful of Miracles"?

Lee Vella, Flushing

Hope Lange portrayed Queenie Martin to Ford's Dave the Dude in that 1961 Frank Capra comedy which also starred Bette Davis. Lange, who was Oscar-nominated for her screen debut in "Bus Stop" (1956), later went on to small-screen stardom in "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir" and "The New Dick Van Dyke Show."



Hope Lange and Glenn Ford in "Pocketful of Miracles"

FROM HERE TO ERROR

Who played the part of Deborah Kerr's husband in the movie version of "From Here to Eternity"? Was it Kirk Douglas or William Powell? I know Burt Reynolds was her lover.

Mary Jane Pacifico, Jersey City

We'll break this as gently as we can. It was Burt Lancaster—not Reynolds—who hit the beach with Deborah Kerr in this 1953 classic taken from James Jones' novel. As for the actor who portrayed her husband, well, a guy named Philip Ober did those honors.

NANNY AND THE GREASER

Is Maxwell Caulfield married and how old is he?

Maria Bryan, Manhattan

Caulfield, who hit big in Off-Broadway's "Entertaining Mr. Sloane" in 1981 and later appeared in the flop "Grease II," is, by our calculations, 24 years old. He is married to Juliet Mills—the "Nanny and the Professor" star who was listed as 39 years old in interviews Max gave in '81 and '82. You figure it out.

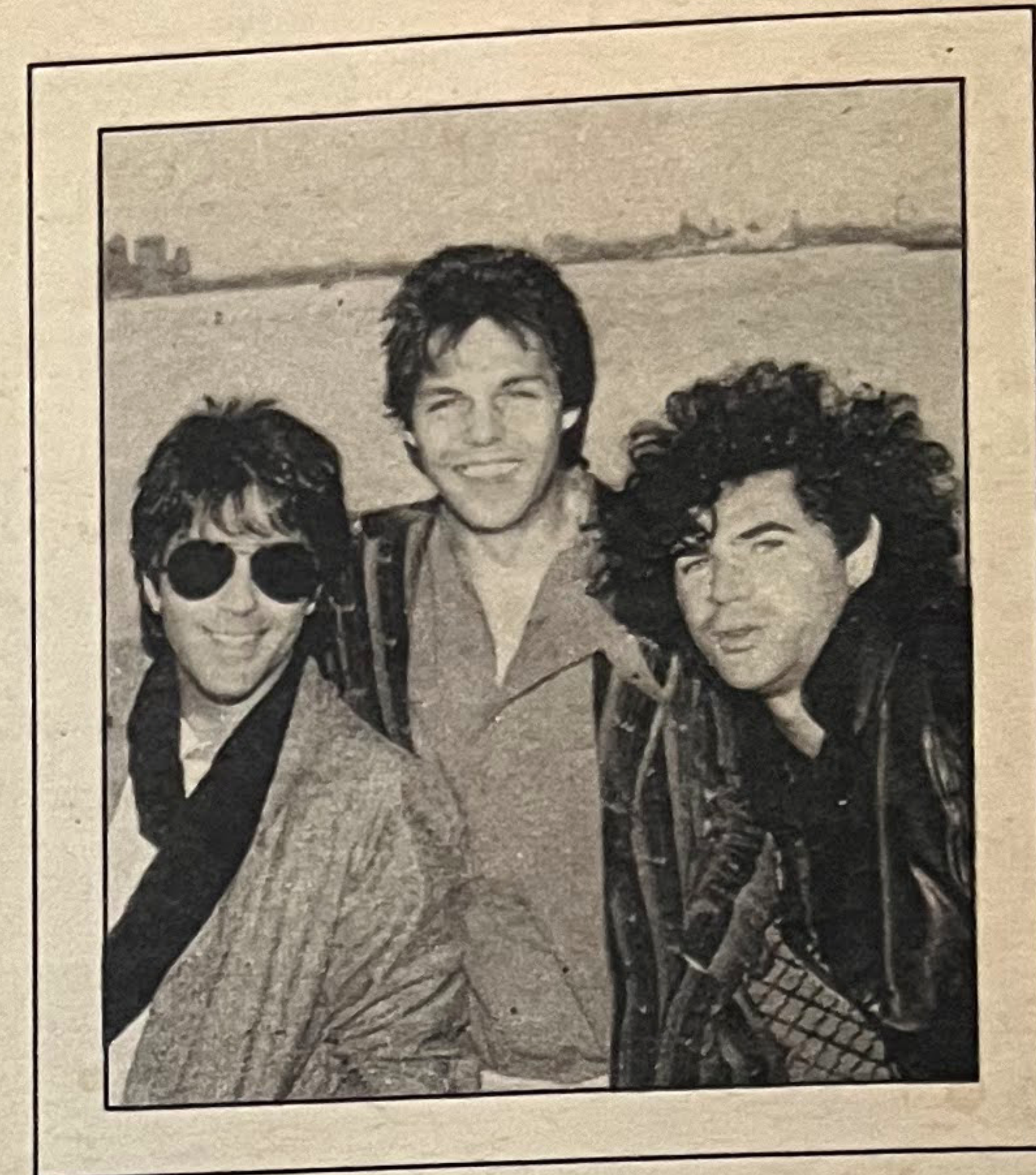
ONCE WAS DEFINITELY ENOUGH

Who was the actor who played Sharon Tate's husband in "Valley of the Dolls"?

Theresa Ferrentino, Elmhurst

Tony Scotti played singer Tony Polar opposite Sharon's Jennifer North in this poorly-received 1967 screen adaptation of Jacqueline Susann's best-selling novel.

Got a question about a celebrity? Send it to Mr. Entertainment, New York Daily News Sunday Magazine, 220 E. 42d St., New York, N.Y. 10017. Questions can be answered only through this column.



ON THE COVER

Staten Island was the childhood home of some of the top musicians in the rock 'n' roll business, people who have played with everyone from John Lennon to Cyndi Lauper. Dozens of them grew up together, played music in Island clubs together, and, one at a time, took the ferry to fame and fortune, or at least to Manhattan. Some of them—like (from left to right) Frankie LaRocka, former drummer for Scandal; Kasim Sulton, bass player for Todd Rundgren's Utopia, and Tommy Price, drummer for Billy Idol—still live on the Island. They may look like rockers, but their lives are not much different from their neighbors'.

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YOU AIN'T HEARD NOTHIN' YET

Our leaders say the darndest things.

By Paul Slansky 8

A NEW FACE IN THE CROWD

Nicolas Cage might have been just another teen star. But then along came "Birdy."

By Neal Hirschfeld 14

IS THERE A MAZEL TOV IN HER FUTURE?

This week, Amy Eilberg will learn whether she's the first woman to be accredited as a Conservative rabbi.

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HIGH TACK

A studio apartment with grand pretensions.

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Cover photo by Ken Korotkin

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BANDS ACROSS THE WATER

How musicians
from
Staten Island
grew up
to play with
John Lennon,
David Bowie,
John Waite,
Billy Idol and
Cyndi Lauper
—and still kept
their Richmond
County values.



PHOTO BY KEN KOROTKIN

SOME OF THEM WILL TELL you that there is a Staten Island sound. This sound was Sandy's sound, this sound was Thommy's sound, from New Dorp High School to West New Brighton; from the South Beach waters to the Oakwood train station, this sound was made by dozens of tattooed teenagers. They were the sons of truckdrivers and librarians, nurses and police officers who had moved from Brooklyn or the lower East Side to those better homes and gardens in New York's suburban borough. They have grown up to become lead singers and hit songwriters, guitarists and bass players, horn players and drummers. A lot of drummers. "The drummers all have a Staten Island sound," says Thommy Price, drummer for Billy Idol, the leather-clad, bleached-blond Rebel Yeller who snarls. "It's pretty simple, real straight ahead. It's very basic rock 'n' roll."

"It's not technically complicated; it's with feel, emotion," says Sandy Gennaro, drummer for Cyndi Lauper, the singer of

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BY JONATHAN MANDELL

FERRY SUCCESSFUL:

Thommy Price, Billy Idol's drummer; Kasim Sulton, Todd Rundgren's bass player, and Frankie LaRocka, drummer-turned-businessman.

"Girls Just Want to Have Fun" who looks a little like a parrot.

Anyone who has suffered through the insistent drone of the ferry might suspect where the Staten Island sound had its origins. But wherever it came from, it has gone on to become instrumental to the music of some of the biggest bands around.

"It's amazing how many people from the Island became successful," says Frankie LaRocka, who has played drums for Top 10 groups like Scandal, John Waite and Bryan Adams.

"What Liverpool was to England," says Kasim Sulton, bass player of Todd Rundgren's Utopia, "that's what Staten Island is to America."

In Staten Island, in the mid-'60s, 20 minutes and many worlds away from Manhattan, there were several choices open to teenagers, according to some-

ferry amps that the other teen rockers were still stuck with. Later, after he changed his name to Earl Slick (from a name he doesn't care to publicize), he would play lead guitar with John Lennon, David Bowie and John Waite.

At the same time, on the north side of the Island, David Johansen became lead singer of The Vagabond Missionaries because, he says, he was the only one who could not afford to buy any instrument. Later, he would launch glitter rock with his group The New York Dolls, and start a successful solo career.

From the driveways, the teen rockers progressed to the high-school dances and "battles of the bands" held at New Dorp or Wagner or Monsignor Farrell, where as many as five or six bands played in the same gymnasium or cafeteria, vying for the audience vote.

That's how they all met—the older ones: Slick and Sandy and David and Hank DeVito (who later wrote "Queen of Hearts" and played with Emmylou Harris) and Tommy Morrongiello (who played with Ian Hunter and Helen Wheels). And the younger Island rockers, like Thommy Price, who added the "h" in his name, and Frankie LaRocka, who changed his name from LaRocca, and Kasim Sulton, whose name is the one he was born with. ("You don't know how traumatic it was growing up with a name like that in a place where everybody else was Tommy or Bobby or Mikey.")

"All of us played together at one time or another," says Thommy Price. "Every week we were splitting up and forming new groups," says Frankie LaRocka. "It was like musical bands."

They hung out together at the Oakwood train station, drinking beer and talking music. Together they graduated from the school dances to a Waldbaum's or Shop-Rite Christmas party. Together, they went on to play the many Staten Island clubs—which were just bars with a corner of the room set up for music—with names like Sonny's Lounge, The Beachcomber, The Playpen. Some of the rockers were too young to have driv-

one who was there: "You could drink, do drugs, commune with squirrels and raccoons. Or play music."

Those who chose music started by listening to it on radio stations that blared British Invasion versions of rhythm and blues. Then they nursed it, rehearsed it, and gave out the news to the neighborhood: "The big thing," Sandy Gennaro explains, "was to rehearse in somebody's yard to attract attention."

Earl Slick was one of the first to make it big. His band, Mack Truck, had two drummers and a Marshall amp, which was the Queen Elizabeth of amplifiers to the, well, Staten Island



AT HOME WITH THE HIP:

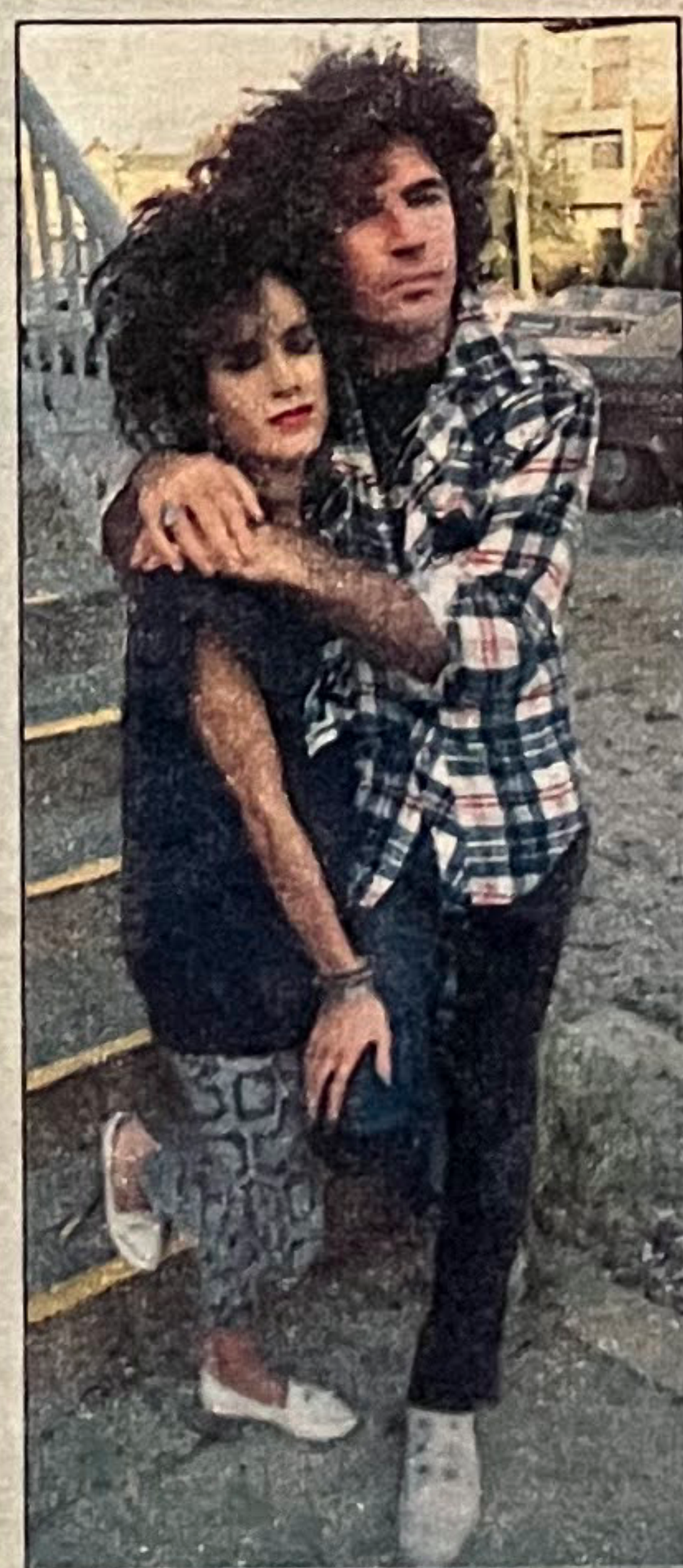
The Sultons—wife Laurie, daughter Alexandra, and rock star Kasim—in their home on "the most conservative block" in Grant City (far left). Sandy Gennaro, Cyndi Lauper's drummer (above), and his proud mother Sadie (left) in his childhood room.



**'TO DIE YOUNG,
IT'S ALREADY
BEEN DONE...
IT'S "IN"
TO BE STRAIGHT.'**

GIVE MY REGARDS TO NEW DORP:

Earl Slick (above) has played lead guitar for John Lennon, David Bowie and John Waite. David Johansen (left), the only Staten Islander with a successful solo career, has taken off the dress and high heels he wore with The New York Dolls. Tommy Price (right) with his wife Debbie, who works on Wall Street.



er's licenses, so their mothers would take them in the family station wagon, and then they would try hard to look tough in chinos and paisley shirts or, later, dungarees and fringed leather vests. Some parents even let them grow their hair below the collar. Then, looking rebellious, the kids would be in the middle of playing "Purple Haze" or "Wipe Out" or a Cream hit or singing "I can't get no satisfaction" when they would be paid a visit by a dozen members of The Breed, a motorcycle gang of some influence on the Island at the time. The meanest, hairiest-looking Breed would invariably walk up to the stage, stand belly forward and issue a command. "Do 'Born to Be Wild,' " he'd bellow. All the Staten Island rockers can still play "Born to Be Wild" backwards.

Whatever the program, by the end of the night, says Slick, "everybody would end up on stage doing jams."

Together, they spent the '60s being the hip fish in the square ponds of Staten Island. And together, although one at a time, they took the ferry to fame and fortune, or at least to Manhattan.

Back on Staten Island, mothers throughout the borough are no longer worried where all the studied rebellion of their children would lead. Now they keep scrapbooks of their sons' Top 10 hits.

"We're so proud of Sandy," says Sadie Gennaro, the mother of Cyndi Lauper's drummer, as she serves iced tea and home-baked cookies to her daughter and grandchildren in the kitchen of her Staten Island home. The TV set is tuned to an afternoon soap, a plate with a picture of Jesus graces the kitchen wall, and down the hall the bedroom is stuffed with snare drums, bass drums, tom-toms, floor toms and cymbals stacked up to the ceiling. That's Sandy's room. "He's very family-oriented," Sadie says. "He goes to the cancer hospital and gives away drum sticks. I'm sure he wouldn't tell you this, because he's very shy."

"A lot of the youngsters Sandy played with didn't make it big," Sadie says. Some became toll collectors,

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THE QUOTABLE REAGAN

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"One set of tablecloths, to my complete and utter horror, went out to the dry cleaner and shrunk."

Muffie Brandon,
Nancy Reagan's
social secretary, on the White
House's "terrible tablecloth crisis"
(11/29/81)

MAKE THAT TWO CRISES

"I don't think that we have a crisis here. I think we'll manage. I don't see this as a frightening thing."

Sheila Tate,
Nancy Reagan's
press secretary, minimizing the
seriousness of the tablecloth situation
(11/30/81)

STOP ME IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE II

"It seems like 29 minutes."
Nancy Reagan on the occasion of
her 29th wedding anniversary (3/4/81)

"It feels like 30 minutes."

Nancy Reagan on the occasion of
her 30th wedding anniversary (3/4/82)

"I cannot believe it's been 32 years. It seems like 32 minutes."

Nancy Reagan on the occasion of
her 32d wedding anniversary (3/1/84)

WARDROBE

"Suddenly, Mrs. Mitterand stopped. She calmly turned her head and said something to me in French, which unfortunately I did not understand. And the butler was motioning for us to come on, and I motioned to her that we should go forward, that we were to go to the other side of the room. And again, very calmly, she made her statement to me. And then the interpreter caught up with us. She was telling me that I was standing on her gown."

President Reagan relating an
amusing incident from a White
House state dinner (4/6/84)

"I had a meeting up here with a lady, and it was a fairly serious meeting, and she and I and Jim Rosebush, who's my chief of staff, were here. And we finished the meeting and everything, and I had on a skirt and a blouse. And Jim had turned to go to the elevator, thank goodness. And the meeting went well . . . and I stood up . . . and I had my hand out to say 'Thank you and goodbye,' and as I stood, and she stood with her hand out, my skirt just went right down to the floor. And I was standing there with my blouse on. And I was yelling to Jim, 'Don't turn around! Don't turn around!' And the poor woman is standing there with her arm out, and I grabbed for my skirt and the only thing I could think of to say was, 'Well, I'm sure this is a meeting you'll never forget.'"

Nancy Reagan
relating an amusing incident
to Merv Griffin
(9/23/83)

STRANGER THAN FICTION

"Well, it's a good story, though."

White House spokesman Larry
Speakes on being informed that Pres-
ident Reagan's statement about the
severity of British gun laws was not,
in fact, true (4/16/82)

"If you tell the same story five times, it's true."

Larry Speakes on being informed
that a World War II anecdote told
repeatedly by President Reagan came
from a movie and was not,
in fact, true (12/17/83)

"You just keep on seeking the truth and I'll keep on telling it, even though you don't recognize it."

President Reagan to White
House reporters (4/24/82)

Paul Slansky predicts that President
Reagan will note the celebration of the
35th anniversary of his 39th birthday this
Wednesday.

STATEN ISLAND ROCKERS

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insurance salesmen, Sanitation men, the Assistant Secretary of State for New York.

But many are making a good living at their adolescent passion. Anne Marie, Sandy's 17-year-old niece, thinks she has figured out why Staten Island spawned so many top rock 'n' rollers all at the same time. "It's a boring place," she says. "There's nothing else to do."

"And you were born here," Sadie says, with an affectionate snort.

They are almost middle-aged now, for rock 'n' rollers. They range in age from 27 to 34. In the '60s, this would have been as much a stigma in the cool world of rock 'n' roll as, say, being from Staten Island. But rock has changed.

And so have the Island rockers, in the 15 years since the first of them left home. Of all of them, Earl Slick looks, sounds and acts the most like what the public expects from a rock star. He is thin and fragile, his body vacuum-packed into black pants and T-shirt, his hair teased into rebellion. He often wears goggles, an original Beatles button and a huge dangling earring. His life has been like a rock star's, too. It's not just the names he has played for: he toured as lead guitarist with David Bowie, and played on John Lennon's last album ("After the sessions, he used to tell me old Beatles stories. I told him old Staten Island stories"); he also made a couple of solo albums, played with Ian Hunter, and now tours with John ("Missing You") Waite. But he comes closest to the image of a rock star, because he nearly self-destructed: "I fell to pieces, drank my

brains out, took a lot of drugs. I can't remember most of 1978 or 1979. I woke up one day four years ago with a five-year-old hangover. I said, 'I've got to stop.' The strongest drug I take now is an aspirin."

He still rarely spends more than a month in any one place, he says, although he promises he will "pick a place and buy a house" as soon as he finishes his current tour, a record and another eight-month tour. Wherever he settles down, he says, it won't be in Staten Island. He doesn't even stay on the Island when he's in New York, although he does take time out from business meetings, video and recording sessions to have dinner with friends like Larry DiMarzio. DiMarzio moved from Queens in 1968 to Staten Island to go to college. "I was the best player in Queens, but when I went to Staten Island, these people blew me away," he says. "There was a whole energy thing going on. It was like the Renaissance. You got enough people in Florence at the time and things just happen. The level of creativity was just incredible."

But if DiMarzio wasn't going to fit in as a rock Michelangelo, he could at least become as helpful, and as rich, as a Medici. He started off helping his new friends fix their guitars. He is now the world's largest independent manufacturer of guitar accessories. His offices are in Staten Island, where he still lives.

He also drives a computerized Cadillac, which he uses to bring Slick uptown to a fancy Japanese restaurant. The two friends discuss what it was about the Island scene that made for so much success later. For one thing, the drinking age was

higher in New Jersey than in Staten Island, which created an Island club market hungry for players. Another reason is that the different musicians helped one another, recommending each other for jobs. The connections are convoluted and astonishing. Many of them played in the same Top 10 bands, although usually not at the same time, and sometimes before they were even Top 10: before Sandy joined Cyndi Lauper, Kasim Sulton worked with her—on a jingle for Jif peanut butter.

But Slick believes the main reason is neither musical ability nor Island connections. "There were some guys on Staten Island who were as good as we were who never made it," he says, with some force. "Me, Thommy, Kasim, Sandy have the most drive of anyone, and that's why we are where we are. It's not the playing. It's got to be there, but the playing is secondary. You've got to have drive, and an iron constitution for abuse."

The rock business is tough, especially for backup musicians, the workhorses of rock 'n' roll. They may have started with dreams of adulation and of covers on *Rolling Stone* or at least *Teen Beat*, but many have grown up to be rock's faceless laborers. "Any band is only as good as its drummer," says Sandy Gennaro. But, as with any manual labor, a drummer's craft is in danger of being made obsolete through automation: many albums now feature the Linndrum, an automated beat. Sure, they can make up to \$2,000 or so a week on tour, maybe get a percentage of record sales. Sandy's face is even prominent on Cyndi's current

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STATEN ISLAND ROCKERS

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video, "Money changes everything." But the song is wrong. There is still no security, no pension and plenty of occupational hazards: Sandy has a serious hearing loss, he is divorced, he is on the road more often than not, and he has no permanent residence at the moment, other than his Mom's.

And that is for the musicians who make it.

David Johansen, the only one from the Island so far to make a name for himself in a solo career, did it by donning a dress and high heels and creating The New York Dolls. This did not shock his neighbors; Staten Island has long encouraged popular music, Johansen says now, wearing the face of a good-natured kidder. "Joan Baez was born on Staten Island," he says. And the Island had a hand in the '50s hit "Woolly Bully" by Sam the Sham and the Pharaohs: Sam was from Texas, but the Pharaohs were from Staten Island.

The Dolls disbanded in 1976. Wearing makeup and pouting, Johansen says, "is for when you're a kid," one of the "innocent forms of rebellion" that occur at a "certain stage in life. . . . It's not something you can do in your 30s, because they'll start calling you Quentin."

Now Johansen has grown up. He wears suits. He has a low-key, bluesy cabaret act called Buster Poindexter, which he performs in between rock tours. He has even tired of thinking of himself as a

rock star—"I'm more from the Judy Garland School of Entertaining." He believes "most people in the rock business aren't exactly rocket scientists" and don't deserve their status as rebel heroes ("People need heroes, I guess, but they shouldn't be bums"). Walking out of his Manhattan apartment to take a bus to Chinatown for a cheap lunch, he complains about the kids with the loud radios from the high school across the street. "You should hear them when it's eight in the morning. If you complained, they'd break your windows."

If Johansen has changed, so, he says, has rock 'n' roll. Now most people hear their rock from videos, shown constantly on television. They are often indistinguishable from the television commercials, and that's no accident. "When I was a kid, they used to say that the CIA was going to take the counter-culture into the mainstream, so it wouldn't have the punch. Maybe the CIA didn't do it," he says, "but it's true. Rock is so mainstream and homogenized now."

Kasim Sulton lives, he says, "on the most conservative block in the area." The area is Grant City, Staten Island—about a mile from where he grew up. It is very quiet. "That's what we like about it," says the man who played with Meat Loaf on "Bat Out of Hell."

His wife Laurie, a former special-education

teacher, offers guests pear pie that she made herself, as their baby Alexandra waddles across the rug toward the gold records hanging neatly above the sofa. Kas and Laurie apologize for the state of the house, even though it is immaculate.

Sulton has the closest thing to a 9-to-5 job that a rock player can have. He has been in the same band for eight years—Utopia, with Todd Rundgren; he tours only four or five months out of the year. "It's still lonely. It's still hard (to tour)," he says. "Going to Europe and California was really nice," he says. "But the Midwest . . ."

"Don't say anything bad about anywhere," Laurie politely admonishes. "Their schedule was so grueling," she says apologetically. "Eleven cities in 12 days."

The Sultons are only one rock couple who still live on the Island that nurtured them. A few minutes' drive away is Tommy Price, drummer with Billy Idol. Price is one of Kasim's oldest friends; when Tommy moved to Staten Island, Kas was the very first kid he met in I.S. 24. They are now both 27 years old, with similar aspirations.

In their leisure time, they like to hang out with the old crowd. Last summer, they organized "the Staten Island All-Stars," a huge jam session held at a club called Wave Street.

Sulton looks like any suburban father, one of

continued on next page

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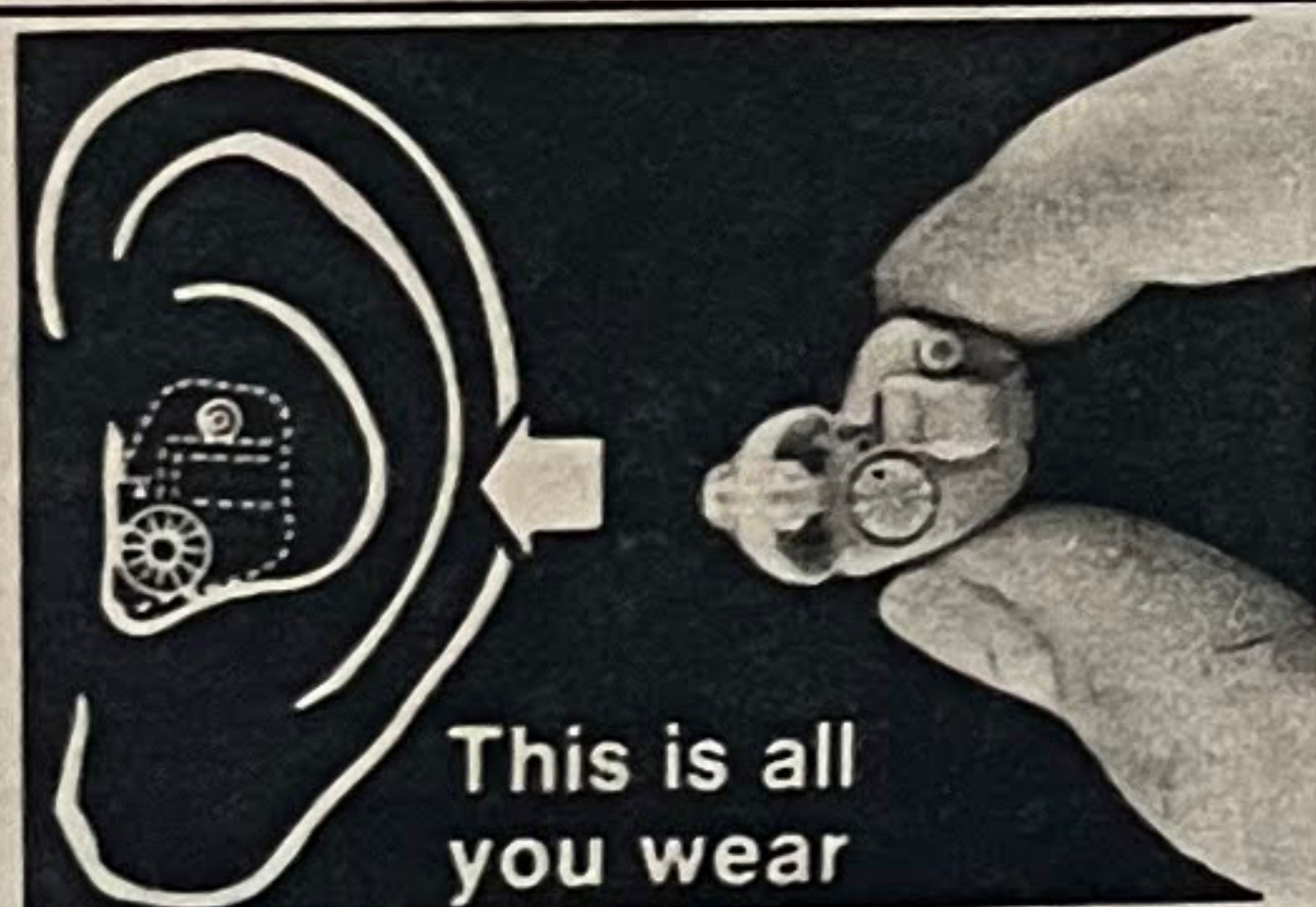
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STATE OF THE ART

BY CAROL KRAMER

La Vie en Rose

WITH VALENTINE'S DAY DRAWING near, you're probably planning to say it with flowers. But be careful, for even the poor lily of the field has to run the gantlet of trend and tide in this status-conscious world.

For instance, "Hawaiian flowers," says Pat Broun of Salou, "are definitely not chic," and most of Manhattan's top florists agree, even though it seems that just a few years ago, the tropical look was as suffocatingly pervasive as the kudzu vine. Today, the bird-of-paradise and the anthurium (probably God's biggest failure in flower design) have joined pompons, daisies, cymbidium orchids, carnations and gladiola on the mulch pile of flower failures.

Many florists would secretly like to resurrect glads, but their funereal image prevents it. Chris Giftos, who arranges the magnificent flowers at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (as well as at some of the poshest parties), is prohibited from using glads because the late Mrs. Lila Wallace, whose endowment pays for the Met's flowers, "didn't care for them."

There is an acceptable carnation, however. It is the "chimere," a large frizzy French carnation available only in pink.

A French accent is as helpful to a flower as it is to a waiter or a hairdresser. Take tulips. Most of them come from Holland, which has revolutionized the flower market in the last four years (the tiny country has the largest surface of greenhouses on earth).

But for the super-chic, the most desirable tulip is the French parrot tulip, a green, ruffled denizen of the Cote D'Azur. According to importer Juerg Schwarz, "The Dutch drive down to France every week to get these tulips and reexport them." The French also grow super-big versions of Holland's second most popular flower, the lily.

Besides tulips and lilies, flowers with a lot of cachet right now are freesias, lilacs, violets, lilies of the valley and mimosa. Corkscrew willow, euphorbia and viburnum (white snowballs) are in good repute, too. So are peonies, but the stubborn things won't be forced and thus are available only in the spring.

But all these flowers must be *pastel* to be really chic. And white-on-white is, in some circles, the very best color scheme.

But what about roses, you romantics ask.

Passe, a little boring, overpriced, say florists. Unless, *mais oui*, they are French, in shades of champagne or silver with five-foot stems. Of course, these will cost \$10 or \$15 a stem.

Instead, consider a romantic garden arrangement for your Valentine. The English garden look—the way you'd pick flowers in a field—still has a lot of clout. But the tighter, more classic Victorian bouquet is extremely popular with the super-rich, who can afford the prices of Victorian expert Marlo Phillips.

The loose, airy garden look can be, in the wrong hands, "mental diarrhea," says society florist Ronaldo Maia, who believes "every



Uncommon scents: To be chic, it must have a French accent like the parrot tulip, or be pale pastel like mimosa or lilac.

flower should say something." Similarly, Robert Homma thinks, "When they mix orchids, bird-of-paradise and flowers from the French and Southwest and say it's the new romantic look—my word, it's dreadful."

But the super-sleek look (one branch in a glass beaker) is "sort of '70s," says Dennis Wilson of Renny, and acceptable only if you haven't yet replaced your high-tech decor with the trendier Victorian-and-chintz look.

For romance, Homma suggests an entire flat of lilies of the valley or a bunch of cut French violets (flown in from Paris on the Concorde).

All of the florists mentioned here do something with flowers and charge accordingly for their artistry. If you're confident enough to do it yourself, the South Flower Markets, on the West and East Sides, sell most of the trendy (and a few untrendy) flowers on the market at fairly low prices.

The wide availability of cheap flowers at vegetable stands and other "bucket shops" worries many full-service florists. But Evan Hughes, who also sells country antiques, says gleefully, "On Valentine's Day, delis won't be delivering." □

Photo by Dick Lewis. Flowers from Robert Homma.

STATEN ISLAND ROCKERS

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the few from the Island crowd that has not kept up with the rock fashion. But even the ones still on Staten Island who look wild have a touch of the suburbs in them. They are the rocks; Slick and Sandy and Johansen are the roll.

Thommy Price, for example, enjoys watching television, especially "The Honeymooners." Price also owns a Volkswagen, and lives in a well-lit apartment building near a train stop. "I think a lot of people don't know I live here. There's a kid downstairs who wakes me up every morning playing Billy Idol records."

"The drummers are supposed to be the wildest," Price says, "although I'm pretty stable. I love my home life." His wife Debbie handles trading problems for institutional sales at Oppenheimer & Co., a Wall Street brokerage firm.

Price admits they won't live in the building forever. He wants to buy a house. "I want some property, I want to invest a bit. I want to have a dog. I want to have a backyard and a white picket fence. The works."

Frankie LaRocka, who also lives on Staten Island, wants the same things. He was a respected drummer for several of the hottest bands, but last year, at the age of 29, he decided to switch careers. He made up a resume listing his impressive credentials (but with not a single mention of the words "drummer" or "drums" on it), and got a job with Atlantic Records, in their A&R department. A&R means Artist and Repertoire, and among LaRocka's responsibilities is to scout out new talent, something he does not do on Staten Island. There's no reason to: the old clubs have closed (one is now a pizzeria, another a catering hall), there are no more high-school dances, the scene is over. Many of his old friends have been getting real jobs, and LaRocka was ready for one too: "I didn't want to be on the road the rest of my life. I didn't want to be 40, like Mick Jagger, batting my brains out. I wanted my life, to be as normal as possible."

The days of Jimi and Joplin and Morrison, of kamikaze rebellion, are over. "To die young," Thommy Price said in an interview with *Modern Drummer*—"it's already been done, you know. It's 'in' to be straight."

"Rock has become a business," says Kasim Sulton. "If you don't treat it like that, you wind up getting burned."

There is irony in viewing rock as a business—the essence of rebellion bottled, packaged and sold like so much Clearasil. But there is also a hint that their motives are not entirely cynical. Kasim Sulton has a song about it on his solo album. The tune is called Rock and Roll:

If he had to sell his soul
for the thing he loves the most,
it would be rock and roll.
Gotta be that rock and roll.
He wants to rock and roll.
Never gonna let it go.

□

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